

OrdnanceReports

News updates from around the world



March 27, 2003



This publication is produced by the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps Communications Coordinator. The purpose of this publication is to provide Command Information materiel concerning world events and the U.S. military's role in those events. Ordnance specific events will be covered if appropriate. Direct your correspondence to Ed Starnes at 410-278-2415 (DSN 298-2415), or email edward.starnes@ocs.apg.army.mil.

U.S. Army troops parachute into northern Iraq

by Brian Murphy and Jonathan Ewing

BASHUR, Iraq (AP) - Denied rights to invade by land from Turkey, the U.S. military instead parachuted about 1,000 Army troops into Kurdish-held northern Iraq in a dramatic nighttime operation that opened another front against Saddam Hussein's regime.

It was one of the biggest paratroop drops in decades and put in place the first large coalition ground force in the north.

Together with the 100 special operations troops and thousands of Kurdish militiamen already in the area, the force intends to square off against an estimated 100,000 Iraqi troops dug in along the green line dividing semi-autonomous northern Iraq from the rest of the country.

"This tightens the noose against Saddam's forces battling coalition forces to the south," Brigadier Gen. James Parker, commander of U.S. forces in the north. "And it may also serve as a warning to Turkish forces."

The soldiers, including elite Army Rangers, jumped out of low-flying

C-17 transport planes under cover of darkness Wednesday and secured a snow-dusted airfield, which will be used to bring in supplies and support personnel.

Three helicopters, flying with nearly all their lights out, could also be seen landing.

U.S. warplanes provided cover, attacking Iraqi ground troops, bunkers, artillery and other targets. But the paratroopers did not come under fire.

Around dawn Thursday, strikes resumed, with a massive explosion just outside the Kurdish zone close to the village of Kalak. Warplanes pounded forward Iraqi positions in the hills overlooking Chamchamal, 22 miles east of the key oil city of Kirkuk.

Kurdish fighters also closed off a highway and roads near the airstrip.

Up until now, only coalition warplanes and small groups of U.S. Special Forces were operating in the region, working with anti-

continued on page 5

DoD announces the status of 507th Maintenance Company soldiers

The Department of Defense announced today the status of 507th Ordnance Maintenance Company soldiers who were ambushed March 23 by enemy forces in Iraq.

Dead are:

Spc. Jamaal R. Addison, 22, of Roswell, Ga.

Pfc. Howard Johnson II, 21, of Mobile, Ala.

Listed as Duty Status Whereabouts Unknown are:

Master Sgt. Robert J. Dowdy, 38, of Cleveland, Ohio

Pvt. Ruben Estrella-Soto, 18, of El Paso, Texas

Spc. James M. Kiehl, 22, of Des Moines, Iowa

Pfc. Jessica D. Lynch, 19, of Palestine, W.Va.

Chief Warrant Officer Johnny Villareal Mata, 35, of El Paso, Texas

Pfc. LoriAnn Piestewa, 23, of Tuba City, Ariz.

Pvt. Brandon Ulysses Sloan, 19, of Bedford, Ohio

Sgt. Donald Ralph Walters, 33, of Salem, Ore.

Listed as Prisoner of War are:

Spc. Edgar Adan Hernandez, 21, of Mission, Texas

Spc. Joseph Neal Hudson, 23, of Alamogordo, N.M.

Spc. Shoshana Nyree Johnson, 30, of El Paso, Texas

Pfc. Patrick Wayne Miller, 23, of Walter, Kan.

Sgt. James Joseph Riley, 31, of Pennsauken, N.J.

Regime threatening children to make men fight

by Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 27, 2003 — Saddam Hussein's regime is forcing men to fight by threatening children, U.S. Central Command officials in Qatar said today.

The Iraqi regime is becoming increasingly desperate and using threats of murder to survive. Members of the "Iraqi regime are seizing children from their homes near the town of an Najaf and are telling families the males must fight for the regime or they will all face execution, said Army Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, vice chief of operations at Central Command.

Brooks said the coalition forces are fighting well and, with overwhelming force, have defeated every threat facing them. He said more coalition forces arrive each day, in accordance with the war plan. DoD officials said more than 250,000 U.S. service members and 40,000 other coalition troops are involved with Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Coalition operations are degrading the regime's control of its forces. "We're seeing locally controlled military and paramilitary actions, frequent 'survival moves' by regime leaders and uncontrolled firing of air defense missiles," he said.

Special operations forces are performing missions throughout the country. "Strategic reconnaissance is ongoing to find weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missiles and regime leaders," Brooks said.

"Unconventional warfare is ongoing in several areas to prepare Iraqis to join in liberation. Direct action occurs at times and places of our choosing."

Fighting overnight came from a mix of regular and irregular Iraqi forces. Vehicle-mounted irregulars east of an Najaf attacked units of the Army's V Corps, he said. "There were reports of a significant number of vehicles approaching," he said. "The reports were not accurate in terms of the size of the force, and V Corps units soundly defeated the attack, destroying most of the force."

In Nasiriyah, units of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force defeated an attack by irregulars supported by armored personnel carriers, rocket launchers and anti-aircraft artillery systems. "The battle lasted about 90 minutes," Brooks said. "The Marines did sustain some wounded, but remain fully effective."

British and American minesweepers are widening the channel that supply ships must use to dock at the port city of Umm Qasr. Yesterday, coalition forces cleared a channel 60 yards wide from the Persian Gulf to Umm Qasr.

"As we expanded that broader to create a 200-yard pathway, we identified some ... bottom-influence mines," Brooks said. "These are subsurface mines able to be programmed ... to count the number of hulls that pass over. After a certain point they detonate. Clearing operations continue today."

Person with suspected Taliban ties held in Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) - U.S. forces detained one person with suspected ties to the former Taliban regime during an operation in southern Afghanistan, the U.S. military said Thursday.

The person was captured in the last 24 hours in the Sami Ghar mountains of southern Kandahar province, the military said in a statement from its headquarters at Bagram Air Base north of the capital.

The statement did not give a name or say why the U.S. military believed the person was linked to the Taliban.

Several hundred U.S.-led soldiers have been deployed in Kandahar province as part of Operation Valiant Strike, which is aimed at hunting down suspected al-Qaida or Taliban fighters and their allies in the area.

In a separate incident, an Afghan security official said a bomb blew up a tanker carrying fuel to a U.S. military base in southern Afghanistan, but there were no casualties.

The explosion late Wednesday took place just over a mile from the Kandahar airport, where thousands of U.S. soldiers are stationed, the security official on condition of anonymity.

The tanker, carrying 11,885 gallons of fuel, had arrived from

neighboring Pakistan and was en route to the U.S. base. Another seven oil tankers were nearby, but escaped damage.

The Afghan authorities blamed suspected terrorists, likely Taliban or loyalists of rebel commander Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. There have been dozens of small attacks in recent months in southern and eastern Afghanistan against U.S.-led coalition forces and the Afghan authorities.

Prime Minister says British soldiers were executed

CAMP DAVID, Md. (Reuters) - British Prime Minister Tony Blair on Thursday said British soldiers fighting in the U.S.-led war in Iraq had been executed after their capture by Iraqi forces.

"We've seen the reality of Saddam's regime: his thugs prepared to kill their own people, the parading of prisoners of war and now the release of those pictures of executed British soldiers," Blair said at a joint news conference with President Bush.

www.goarmy.com

Marines find weapons in Iraq hospital

by Lisa Burgess, Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — U.S. Marines on Tuesday captured a hospital in An Nasiriyah, Iraq, that Iraqi paramilitary troops were using as a staging area, according to U.S. Central Command officials.

Marines from Task Force Tarawa had been fired on from the hospital on Monday, a CENTCOM release on the capture said. The building was clearly marked as a hospital by a flag with a red crescent, which is used by the Society of the Red Crescent (the Muslim equivalent of the International Red Cross) as its symbol.

The task force, which includes the 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines, captured about 170 Iraqi soldiers “who were not armed and wearing a mixture of mostly civilian clothing, with parts of military uniforms,” the release said.

The Marines used loudspeakers to direct staff and patients to evacuate the hospital before storming the facility, and no civilians were in the hospital when it was seized, CENTCOM officials said.



British soldiers of the Light infantry and 2nd Royal Tank Regiment secure a stronghold in Az Zubayr near Basra, southern Iraq, Thursday, March 27, 2003. Building to building fighting is now the tactical approach being employed by the British troops against the running guerilla-style attacks by Iraqis. (AP Photo/Brian Roberts, pool)

continued on page 4

Coalition air forces fly 1,500 missions March 26

by Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 27, 2003 — Coalition air forces struck repeatedly at Iraqi Republican Guard formations March 26, defense officials said.

Coalition aircraft flew about 1,500 sorties with about 600 strikes on that day. Only about 100 of the strikes were “planned.” Most were Republican Guard targets of opportunity, officials said. The planned targets aimed at Iraqi command and control sites, leadership targets in and around Baghdad and portions of the Iraqi integrated air defense system.

Officials said press reports that the Iraqi air defense system is not operating are wrong. “While we have degraded the system quite a bit, flying over Iraq is still dangerous,” said the official. “We continue to target Iraqi defenses.”

Still, coalition air forces have not just air superiority over Iraq, but “air dominance.” “The Iraqis have chosen not to take us on in the skies,” said the official. “They are keeping their planes on the ground.”

Officials also addressed charges that American bombs went astray and struck a Baghdad market. The coalition did not have any missions aimed near the area, they said. They conjectured that the hit may

have been an Iraqi air defense missile. Coalition officials said the Iraqis do not turn on their radars to guide missiles against coalition planes because they know the coalition will sense the radars and destroy them. As a result, the Iraqis simply fire their missiles into the sky and hope they run into coalition planes.

What goes up and doesn’t hit something must come back down, however, and the Iraqi missiles may be impacting in Baghdad, a Defense official said.

The same is true of anti-aircraft artillery fired at coalition aircraft. Chunks of falling shrapnel from these shells can wound or kill people on the ground. Coalition officials stress that they are working diligently to spare the Iraqi people. As part of that, more than 70 percent of the air-dropped weapons are precision-guided munitions. Warplanes drop so-called “dumb bombs” only when collateral damage is not a specific issue, officials said.

Officials said coalition aircraft are providing close-air support for ground forces all through Iraq. In addition to the strike sorties, coalition air forces launched tanker aircraft, electronic surveillance aircraft, reconnaissance planes and air transport aircraft to support operations.

Coalition aircraft are also targeting suspected Scud missile sites in western Iraq.

Coalition progress ‘phenomenal,’ DoD officials say

by Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 26, 2003 — Six days into the campaign against Iraq and the coalition progress has been “phenomenal,” Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clarke said today.

Clarke, briefing at a Pentagon news conference with Army Maj. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, said the coalition is making progress on the sea, land and air.

“On the sixth day of this campaign, going against a regime that knows that the days are numbered, we have air dominance, we have Special Forces in the north, the south and the west, the main ground forces are moving at a phenomenal pace toward the north, closing in on Baghdad,” she said. “We’ve de-mined the waterways so the humanitarian assistance can and is coming in. We’re securing the ... oil fields in the south for the benefit of the Iraqi people.”

McChrystal, the Joint Staff’s vice chief for operations, gave a bit more detail. He said more than 250,000 Americans are involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom. More than 40,000 coalition troops, mostly British, are also helping liberate the country.

“Our ground forces are pushing north toward Baghdad and al Kut,” he said. “We are more than 220 miles into Iraqi territory and have done it in only six days in spite of difficult weather.” The general gave more details on the fighting yesterday around an Najaf.

“The 7th Cavalry was engaged by irregular forces firing rocket-propelled grenades and anti-tank weapons,” he said. “In the middle of bad conditions, our forces responded by destroying more than 30 enemy vehicles and killing enemy personnel in the hundreds. No U.S. forces were killed in the exchange.”

Many of the Iraqis wore civilian clothes and drove civilian vehicles, he said.

Clarke said the Iraqi flouting of international conventions is getting more flagrant.

“In southern Iraq yesterday, the Iraqi military even used a hospital as a fortress, firing on Marines,” she said. “The building was clearly marked as a hospital by a flag with a red crescent, designed to protect it from attack.” Even during war, hospitals are sacrosanct, she added.

“When the Marines took over the building,” she continued, “they found a den of destruction. They captured 170 Iraqi troops, they found about 200 weapons, stockpiles of ammunition, and 3,000 chemical suits with masks, and even a tank.”

In a chilling note, the Marines also discovered the Iraqis had stockpiled medicine to counter nerve agent. “Since coalition forces obviously do not have or use nerve gas, the conclusion is inescapable — the enemy may be planning to use such agents against us or the Iraqi people,” she said.

The air campaign against the regime continues with coalition aircraft flying almost 700 sorties yesterday, McChrystal said. Most of the



Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clarke and Army Maj. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the Joint Staff’s vice chief for operations, answer reporters’ questions during a March 26 Pentagon news briefing. DoD photo by Helene C. Stikkel

attack sorties were aimed at Iraqi regime targets in the vicinity of Baghdad.

Coalition aircraft also hit missile sites throughout southern and western Iraq. “Since March 20, our forces have fired more than 600 Tomahawks and dropped more than 4,300 precision-guided weapons,” he said.

DoD officials said about 80 percent of the aerial weapons used in the campaign to date are precision-guided munitions.

Marines find weapons in Iraq hospital continued

Marines found inside the hospital “further evidence” that the Iraqi regime possesses weapons of mass destruction and its intent to use them, Army Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, CENTCOM’s deputy director of operations, said Wednesday during a press conference from the forward command’s headquarters at Camp as Sayliyah, Qatar.

Inside the hospital, the Marines found and confiscated more than 200 weapons, stockpiles of ammunition, more than 3,000 chemical protection suits and masks, and Iraqi military uniforms. The Marines also found a T-55 tank on the compound.

“What we found [Tuesday] night inside that hospital reinforces our concern” and assertion of the regime’s possession of the weapons, Brooks said.

Col. Ron Johnson, TFTAra’s operations officer, told CENTCOM officials that the Iraqi soldiers were probably being bused into An Nasiriyah in civilian clothes, then going to the hospital to draw both weapons and uniforms before fighting coalition forces in the city.

Marked hospital facilities are protected against military strikes by the Geneva Conventions. In the past two days senior U.S. defense officials have repeatedly condemned the Iraqi military’s use of such protected symbols to conduct a guerrilla warfare campaign.

The 170 soldiers captured at the hospital bring the task force’s enemy prisoner of war captures to about 500 since the war began last week, the release said.

U.S. Army troops parachute into northern Iraq continued

Saddam Kurdish fighters.

The Pentagon had hoped to have the Army's 4th Infantry Division invade Iraq from the north while the main U.S. assault force moved on Baghdad from the south. But Turkey balked at allowing up to 62,000 U.S. troops to use Turkish territory.

With Wednesday's airdrop, the military instead shifted to a smaller, lighter force, drawn from the Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade, based in Vicenza, Italy.

The paratroopers silently drifted to earth from the cargo planes flying through a moonless sky. Heavy equipment, including Humvees, were dropped first, swaying in their harnesses as they fell into the muddy fields below.

Soldiers spent much of the night looking for the vehicles, and once they were found, had a difficult time driving them out of the mud.

"This operation boldly underscores that the United States can put a force anywhere it wants in about 10 minutes," said Maj. Mike Hastings.

Lt. Col. Thomas Collins, a spokesman for the Army's Southern European Task Force, refused to say whether the 173rd went directly from Italy into Iraq or took a different route. Italy's parliament voted this month to allow coalition forces to use Italian air space and military bases - but not for direct attacks on Iraq.

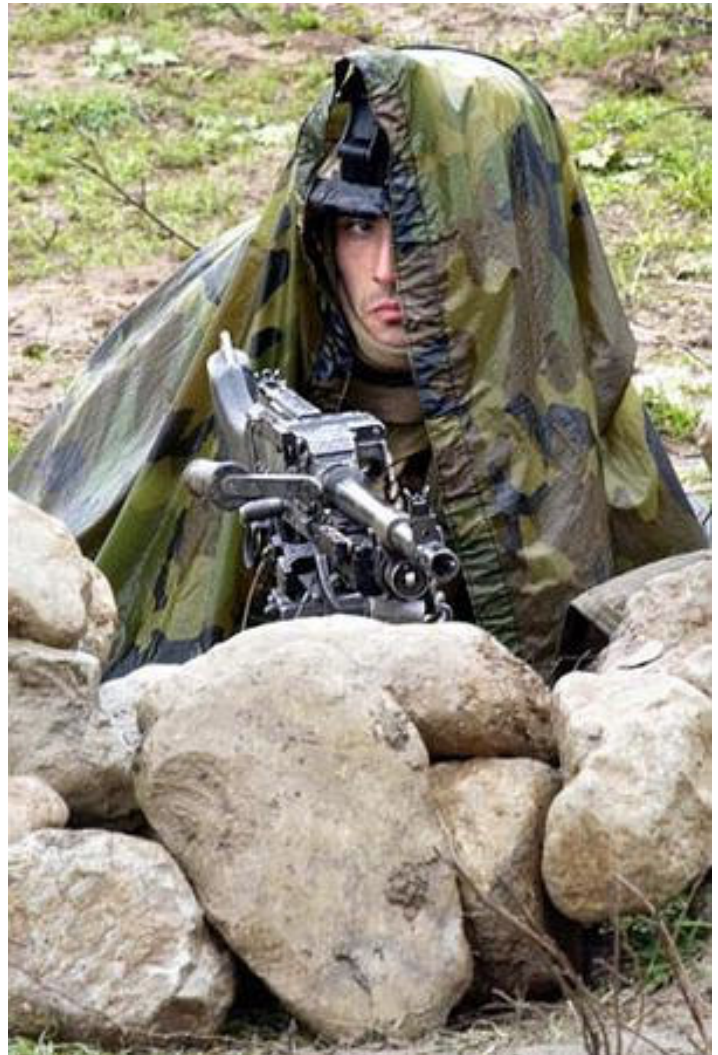
It was not clear if the deployment would violate the terms of the country's involvement, but the matter immediately sparked controversy in Italy, where there is a strong anti-war movement.

The town of Bashur is about 30 miles south of the Turkish border. The airfield's 6,700-foot runway is long enough to land military cargo planes.

The key targets in northern Iraq include the oil fields around the cities of Mosul and Kirkuk, and Tikrit, Saddam's hometown and the tribal center for most of his inner circle. Members of Iraq's Republican Guard have also been posted there.

Another key mission for the 173rd could be to keep order in northern Iraq, which is controlled by Kurdish factions but also includes several splinter organizations and is a base for an al-Qaida-linked Islamic militant group.

Turkey has said it may send troops into northern Iraq to prevent refugees from moving north - an idea U.S. officials vehemently



A paratrooper of U.S. Army 173rd airborne guards the Harir airfield, 45 miles northeast of the Kurdish city of Irbil, Thursday, March 27, 2003. Denied rights to invade by land from Turkey, the U.S. military instead parachuted about 1,000 Army troops into Kurdish-held northern Iraq in a dramatic nighttime operation that opened another front against Saddam Hussein's regime.(AP Photo/Hasan Sarbakhshian)

oppose, for fear of friendly-fire incidents and clashes between Turks and Iraqi Kurds.

The Kurdish-run enclave in northern Iraq has been beyond the control of the Baghdad government since the establishment of a no-fly zone following the 1991 Gulf War.

Go Ordnance! www.goordnance.apg.army.mil

www.goarmy.com

Testimony as Prepared for Delivery by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, Senate Appropriations Committee and House Appropriations Committee — Subcommittee on Defense, Thursday, March 27, 2003.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to update you on our progress in the global war on terror, and to discuss the President's emergency supplemental request to fund worldwide operations in support of that war.

We are now less than a week into Operation Iraqi Freedom. The major ground war began last Thursday at 10 p.m., and the major air war started on Friday, the following day at 1 p.m. Eastern Time. So while the conflict is well begun, it has only begun—we are still closer to the beginning than the end.

Already, coalition forces have made good progress. The men and women in uniform—U.S. and coalition forces alike—are doing a superb job. They have engaged the enemy in demanding circumstances—enduring wind gusts in excess of 85 miles-an-hour, and sand storms so intense that they literally turn day into night, blacking out the sun. They face an adversary which has demonstrated its contempt for the laws of war—dressing its forces as liberated civilians; sending them out waving white flags, feigning surrender, in order to draw coalition forces into ambushes; using hospitals as a base from which to launch attacks and hiding behind human shields.

In spite of these challenges, what coalition forces have accomplished in less than a week is remarkable:

- Coalition aircrews have flown thousands of sorties, striking leadership and Republican guard targets day and night.
- Coalition ground forces have raced across more than 200 miles of

Iraqi territory—through enemy fire and inhospitable terrain—to reach a point just south of Baghdad in less than a week. It is an impressive rate of advance.

- They have secured Iraq's southern oil fields, preventing an environmental disaster and the destruction of critical resources that the Iraqi people will need once Saddam Hussein has been removed.
- In the North, the coalition has launched devastating attacks on terrorist targets, is having success in disrupting terrorist operations, and has prevented an Iraqi advance on the Kurds.
- In the West, coalition forces have had good success securing the region and dealing with the regime's capability to threaten neighboring countries from that part of Iraq.

As the battle unfolds in Iraq, coalition forces are also engaged in operations elsewhere in the world in support of the global war on terror. Just a few weeks before the Iraq campaign began, the al-Qaeda network was dealt a serious blow with the capture of one of their most senior operatives—Khalid Sheik Mohammed. And last week, as Operation Iraqi Freedom got underway, coalition forces also launched a major assault on terrorists operating in the southern mountains of Afghanistan—Operation Valiant Strike. Many other anti-terrorist efforts are underway throughout the world—efforts that are, of necessity, often unseen, but which are helping to protect our people from further acts of terror.

continued on page 7



Marines with gun 6 from battery M, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment wait in their artillery position in central Iraq for their next mission Wednesday. Army Times photo by Jud McCrehin.

Testimony as Prepared for Delivery by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld continued

The point is this: all elements of national power are fighting the global war on terror on all fronts. The coalition is putting steady pressure on al-Qaeda, in Afghanistan and across the globe. And the Iraqi regime is discovering they made a serious miscalculation in rejecting 12 years of efforts to secure their peaceful disarmament.

The campaign could well grow more dangerous in the coming days and weeks, as the forces close in on Baghdad. But the outcome is assured. Saddam Hussein's regime will be removed. The only thing that remains unclear is precisely how long it will take.

We do know this much: these efforts cost money. The costs of military operations in Iraq, and the other missions currently underway in the global war on terror, cannot be absorbed without the emergency supplemental appropriation the President has requested.

Since the new fiscal year began, every month since October 2002—October, November, December, January, February and now March 2003—we have had to borrow from other programs to pay for the costs of the global war on terror.

That pattern cannot continue much longer. The Services have already gone through all of their discretionary spending for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd quarters of 2003—and will soon have exhausted 4th quarter discretionary funding.

If this continues, we will run out of discretionary funds by late spring/early summer—which could force us to curtail training, maintenance and other critical activities.

The President has submitted a supplemental request of \$74.7 billion. It includes \$62.6 billion for the Department of Defense to support military operations in Iraq and throughout the global war on terror. Our troops are depending on it—those engaged in battle, those preparing for battle, those stationed at critical outposts across the globe, and those deployed here in the United States defending the homeland.

The request for DoD includes, among other things:

- \$7.1 billion for the round-trip costs of transporting our forces and equipment to and from the theater of operations;
- \$13.1 billion to provide war fighters in theater with the fuel, supplies, repair parts, maintenance, and other operational support they need to prevail;
- \$15.6 billion for incremental personnel costs, such as for special pay and compensation for mobilized reservists;
- \$7.2 billion to start reconstituting our forces by replacing the cruise missiles, smart bombs, and other key munitions being expended in the course of the conflict.
- \$12 billion for stability operations, military operations to root out terrorist networks and deal with any remaining pockets of resistance, humanitarian assistance, and operations to search for and destroy Iraqi WMD.

· \$1.5 billion for coalition support in the global war on terror—including \$1.3 billion for reimbursement to Pakistan and other key cooperating nations assisting the effort in Afghanistan, and \$165 million for training of the Afghan National Army.

· And \$6.1 billion for other requirements outlined in the request to support military operations in Iraq and the global war on terror.

Of the \$62.6 billion the President has requested for DoD in this supplemental, \$30.3 billion are funds that have already been spent or committed—including the cost of flowing forces into the region to support the diplomatic efforts before Operation Iraqi Freedom began.

If the Iraqi regime had agreed to voluntarily disarm and prevent a war, the costs of sustaining that military pressure through the rest of the fiscal year would have been in excess of \$40 billion. So even without a war, the costs of disarming Iraq would have been significant.

The President has also requested funds in this supplemental for both an Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund, and a Natural Resources Risk Remediation Fund to help with emergency fire fighting and repair of damage to oil facilities. It is important that we have these resources available.

But let me be clear: when it comes to reconstruction, before we turn to the American taxpayers, we will turn first to the resources of the Iraqi government itself and the international community. That is why the President last week seized frozen Iraqi assets in the United States—so that they can be put to use to rebuild the country. Once Saddam Hussein is gone, the U.S. will work with the Iraqi Interim Authority that will be established to tap Iraq's oil revenues, the funds Iraq is owed in the UN's "oil for food" program, and other Iraqi resources to fund their reconstruction effort.

Reconstruction will require a significant international effort. The threat posed by Saddam Hussein's regime is a global threat—which is why some 47 nations have publicly associated themselves with the coalition in Iraq, and many more are helping privately. Already, a number of countries have indicated that they want to help with reconstruction and stability in a post-Saddam Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, in addition to needing this supplemental, we also need greater flexibility in how we spend it—so we can adjust to the constantly changing circumstances of the war.

It is our hope that the period of intense combat in Iraq will be as short as possible—and that the coalition operations can shift quickly from combat to restoring stability and civil order, supplying humanitarian assistance, and helping Iraq's people rebuild and assume functional and political authority from the coalition.

That is our hope. But when it will happen is not knowable.

· We do not know when the period of intense combat will end.

continued on page 13

Iraqi POWs straining resources

Story and photo by Joseph Giordano, Stars and Stripes

CENTRAL IRAQ — Prisoners of war, even in the smallest numbers, are putting a logistical strain on the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment.



Iraqi civilians wait as American soldiers inspect their vehicles outside of As Samawah. Not only do U.S. troops have to deal with Iraqi POWs, but encounters with civilians are slowing down the troops' advance, too. Scouts must stop each vehicle, search it, determine its occupants' intentions and somehow communicate that the civilians should leave the area.

While the 3rd Infantry Division forces in southern and central Iraq have not encountered mass surrenders like those occurring in Basra, these U.S. troops recently captured 300 Iraqi soldiers near the Iraqi 11th Infantry headquarters near An Nasiriyah.

The bulk of those Iraqis simply walked up to the U.S. soldiers with hands held aloft, smiling and flashing American leaflets with surrender instructions that had been dropped earlier in the week. The leaflets promise food, water and the chance to live. Now the Americans must provide prisoners with all three.

“Our hope is that as many enemy surrender

as possible. But once they do surrender, we have certain obligations to them,” said Lt. Col. John Charlton, commander of Task Force 1-15.

“We’ve made those promises in our leaflet drops and have certain obligations under the Geneva Conventions. We will honor those obligations.”

After the battle at An Nasiriyah, Iraqi prisoners were herded into holding pens surrounded by concertina wire. They were given food and water; some were questioned by U.S. military intelligence officials.

Among the prisoners was the Iraqi 11th Infantry commanding general, who told American interrogators that the entire division had surrendered.

“He’s being cooperative and is assuring us that his troops are done fighting,” said Capt. Dave Smith, an intelligence officer with 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry.

But sporadic fighting continued through the next night, and more

prisoners were taken. As the U.S. task force continued its push toward Baghdad, some soldiers and equipment had to be left behind to deal with the prisoners.

Adding to the problems are the Iraqi civilians that the U.S. troops are encountering on the battlefield. The soldiers are under strict rules of engagement that limit who and what they can fire upon.

It is certainly not all-out war.

One advancing armor column stalled for 45 minutes as it tried to discern whether an Iraqi radio tower was a legitimate military target. In the end, it drove around the complex. And as the long column of Task Force 1-15 continues toward other military objectives in Iraq, it is slowed by each civilian vehicle it encounters.

Scouts must stop the vehicle, search it, determine its occupants’ intentions and somehow communicate that the civilians should leave the area. Written placards in Arabic help with the task, but sometimes the overly friendly Iraqi civilians want to chat before moving on.

“These people smile too much,” joked Pvt. Carlos Evans, a scout platoon Humvee driver. “We got to get on about our business.”

U.S.: Iraq may have caused civilian deaths in Baghdad

CAMPAS SAYLIYAH, Qatar (AP) - The U.S. military said Thursday “it was entirely possible” that an Iraqi missile was responsible for the marketplace explosion in Baghdad that killed 14 civilians.

Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, deputy operations officer, said Iraq was firing missiles from batteries in Baghdad on Wednesday and that it has been using old missile stocks fired with their guidance systems turned off.

“We think it is entirely possible that this may have been an Iraqi missile that went up and came down, or, given the behaviors of the regime lately, it may have been a deliberate attack inside of town,” Brooks said.

He said the United States had an air mission in the area but not in the neighborhood that was devastated by the explosion.

“We did have an air mission that attacked some targets, not in that area but in another area, and they did encounter some surface-to-air missile fire,” Brooks told the daily briefing at the coalition headquarters.

Fourteen civilians were reported killed in the north Baghdad Shaab neighborhood in a blast that Iraqi officials blamed on cruise missiles.

Iraq’s health minister said a total of 36 civilians were killed and 215 wounded in U.S. air strikes on Baghdad on Wednesday. He accused the United States and Britain of deliberately targeting civilians to

continued on page 9

Press and military seem to appreciate media embeds

by Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 26, 2003 — For the past week, the world has had unprecedented access to the combat zone in Iraq.

More than 500 reporters from all sorts of news organizations are “embedded” with units from all services.

First reports of the process have been positive. “So far, the embedding seems to have gone very well,” said Victoria Clarke, assistant secretary of defense for public affairs. “Americans and people around the world are seeing firsthand the wonderful dedication and discipline of the coalition forces.”

The process has advantages. First, the reporters and news organizations get access. They get the stories out quickly and send them directly to their news organizations. Reporters have rules they understand before they go into the field. They know not to give away any data that could be helpful to the enemy.

“Embedded reporters and news organizations are trying hard to cover the war while protecting operational security and the safety of the people involved,” Clarke said. “We have had very few problems thus far.”

Kathryn Kross, CNN’s Washington Bureau chief, agrees. “Overall, it’s going very well,” she said during a phone interview. “There are little hitches in the process, but the Pentagon people have worked with us to solve them. Of course, it’s still early in the process.”

Kross said CNN’s embedded reporters have been pleased with the access they have gained. They have also enjoyed the cooperation they have received from local commanders, she added.

Embedding has a secondary effect. DoD officials believe that once reporters get to meet, speak and live with military people, they will have a greater appreciation of them and the things they go through.

This is an epic change. Since the Vietnam War, reporters have had severely curtailed media access to the men and women of the armed forces.

Joe Galloway, the co-author of “We Were Soldiers Once ... And Young,” spoke about the subject with the Naval Institute’s magazine “Proceedings.” “What always needs to be built — and it has to be built slowly and over time — is a level of trust,” he said. “The only way you can do this is to let the young reporters walk beside the young lieutenants in any war we fight.

“If you do this, they will come out with a bond stronger than any known to man. It’s just natural. And the reporters will come out with a knowledge deep enough and strong enough so they can do their jobs without creating risk or danger to those they cover. That would be the last thing they would want to do.”

The immediacy of the reporting also has consequences not foreseen. During a briefing March 25, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld touched on the changes. During World War II, he said, there was no

television and most people received their news from radio or newspapers. The Movietone News reels, played in movie theaters, were the source of moving pictures of the war, and they were weeks or months old.

“And now what we’re seeing is every second, another slice of what’s actually happening out there,” Rumsfeld said. “It is a breathtaking sight to see it. It tends to be all accurate, but not in an overall context.”

And it leaves people with the impression that the war has “been going on for days and weeks and months” and not just five days, he said.

There are limits to what embedding can show. Embedded reporters cover what they see. They are great at getting a company or battalion look at the war. One battalion could be charging toward Baghdad. Another, 10 miles away, could be involved in a firefight. Still another battalion could be waiting for something to happen.

Someone needs to present the larger picture because the overall picture is missing from embedded reports. Briefers at higher headquarters — U.S. Central Command and the Pentagon — are needed to stitch those snapshots together into a coherent mosaic, DoD officials said.

Kross touched on that. She said that the television images are often “compelling,” but may not add to the story. She said in 24-hour coverage, reporters must place these images in context. “It’s one of the most daunting tasks we face,” she said.

She called the embedding process an “incredibly ambitious” plan, and said she was pleased it has worked out so well. Military officials also voice optimism on the program.

Getting the media onto the battlefield has been a historic event, Air Force Maj. Gen. Victor Renuart, operations chief at U.S. Central Command, said during a March 25 briefing.

“I think most of the commanders who have embedded correspondents out there with them are very comfortable with them. I think they have been supportive of them,” he said. “So, I think ... it’s something we’ve had to adapt to, but I think we have adapted pretty well, and we’ll continue to have the media with us.”

U.S.: Iraq may have caused civilian deaths in Baghdad continued

break the Iraqi people’s will.

Brooks said civilian injuries appeared to be concentrated in Shiite populations and “there may be a pattern” of Iraqis targeting that group, which is the majority in the country ruled by Saddam Hussein’s Sunni-dominated regime.

Photographs shown at the briefing included a damaged missile factory in Baghdad and a television satellite transmission facility that was knocked off the air.

National Guard's WMD response teams gain new capabilities

by Kathleen T. Rhem, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 26, 2003 – The National Guard Bureau's 32 Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Teams have gained new capabilities since last summer, an expert on the teams' capabilities explained today.

Two new high-tech pieces of equipment improve the teams' abilities to identify both chemical and biological substances, Army Maj. Julie Bentz said in an interview at the Pentagon. She's a science adviser to the National Guard Bureau on homeland defense issues.

Bentz and members of the 34th WMD-CST from Virginia were at the military headquarters to display their equipment and capabilities.

The two new pieces of equipment – the FTIR, or Fourier Transform Infrared, and the PCR, or polymerase chain reaction — help the teams to be more efficient in their role as the “eyes forward” for state and national public health labs.

“State labs can't go to an incident site,” Bentz explained. “They need to wait for stuff to come to them.”

The WMD-CSTs provide an invaluable service by performing screening tests in the field. “We do an initial analysis and say, ‘Hey, this looks like anthrax, for instance,’” Bentz said. “And we call back to the state public health lab, so they get all of their anthrax protocols out and start processing that.”

She said giving the labs a heads-up can save hours and even days.

The two pieces of equipment are not based on new science. But modern technology is allowing that science to be more mobile than ever before.



Staff Sgt. Kervin Sider provides information to defense contractors from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency as they check out one of the static display set up by the Virginia Guard's 34th Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team in the Pentagon Center Courtyard, as they provide viewers with the latest in dealing with a possible Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or High-Yield Explosives (CBRNE) incident. U.S. Navy photo by Chief Photographer's Mate Johnny Bivera.

For instance, Bentz explained, older FTIR equipment she has worked with “would take up the whole table,” and so sensitive that even a door slam could knock its laser out of alignment, which sometimes took days to correct.

She said the mobile equipment is hardened, “ruggedized” and miniaturized — now it's about the size of a large shoebox.

She explained the FTIR equipment uses an infrared laser to identify chemical molecules or rule out biological molecules in about a minute. Before this was available, lab technicians had to rely on hand-held assay tests to try to identify substances. These would rule things out but not always identify a mystery substance. The FTIR will.

“This will tell me if something is Desitin or Equal or coffee creamer,” Bentz said. With the older assays, “if you had a white powder and you put it on (an assay) ticket, it would tell you it's not anthrax,” she said, adding, “Well, great, then what is it?”

The other new piece of equipment, the PCR, identifies biological warfare agents — such as anthrax, ricin, smallpox and botulinum — and biological pathogens, including lysteria, e-coli, and salmonella, in about an hour. About the size of a carry-on suitcase, this machine is an improvement over previous technology because it can get results from smaller or more diluted samples, Bentz explained.

These capabilities help the team assist an incident commander get a handle on the situation much quicker than might otherwise be possible.

“The faster you can get the incident commander in control of the situation,” Bentz said, “the quicker you can provide a sense of relief and support to the community.”



Army Sgt. 1st Class Tomkinson shows off part of a static display set up by the Virginia Guard's 34th Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team in the Pentagon Center Courtyard, as they provide viewers like defense contractors Joel Fauson and Darci Bloyer with the latest in dealing with a possible Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or High-Yield Explosives (CBRNE) incident. U.S. Navy photo by Chief Photographer's Mate Johnny Bivera.



North Korean officers view the demilitarized zone (DMZ) from the North Korean side of the Panmunjom truce village on the North-South border March 27, 2003. The U.S.-led United Nations Command, that monitors the DMZ between the two Koreas, said it was unfortunate North Korea had pulled out of liaison talks at the border. Reuters photo.

Comforting survivors: priority one for Casualty Assistance Officers

by Gerry J. Gilmore, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 26, 2003 – The military's casualty assistance officers do their best to comfort and assist the next-of-kin of service members who've been wounded, killed or missing in action.

That's the message John Molino, the deputy undersecretary of defense for military community and family policy, delivered today to Pentagon reporters.

Assisting the families left behind is "our No. 1 concern," noted Molino, who also oversees military mortuary affairs.

Casualty assistance officers are active-duty officers or enlisted members, Molino explained, who've been trained to render assistance to relatives of service members killed, wounded or reported missing in action.

By policy, he continued, casualty assistance officers provide the details of death or wounds, comfort survivors and help them choose the type of interment, including arrangement of military honors. These officers also help survivors apply for Service Members' Group Life Insurance compensation and other benefits.

Service members record who they want contacted on their record of emergency data documents. Molino said casualty assistance officers notify those contacts in person within 24 hours of when the military finds out.

Primary next-of-kin get notified in person. These can be a surviving spouse or, if the service member is single, parents; secondary next-of-kin are normally a service member's parents, if he or she is married.

Secondary next-of-kin also get notified in person, he added, if the service member's death resulted from hostile or terrorist action.

Casualties' personal information, such as name, rank and hometown, cannot be released to the public until the appropriate family members

have been notified, Molino emphasized.

"We are most concerned with maintaining our sensitivity to the families and the privacy of the families," he pointed out. But once survivors have been notified, there's no policy that prevents them from speaking to reporters.

Molino said he is "very pleased, impressed and grateful for the sensitivity the media has shown" for the surviving families of service members killed during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The military is responsible for providing accurate information to designated survivors, Molino noted, adding that families' dignity is also protected.

"We don't deal in rumors; we deal in the facts as we know them," Molino emphasized. "We are as honest with the family members as we possibly can be."

Overseas military service headquarters send word of casualties back to service-branch headquarters in Washington, he explained. The headquarters then notify regional commanders, who assign casualty assistance officers to notify the next-of-kin.

A pair of casualty assistance officers is normally dispatched to notify next-of-kin, Molino said.

"It is most important for emotional support to the family that there be a team," he noted.

Molino said chaplains or commanding officers, when possible, might be included on casualty assistance teams.

Or it can be any two individuals trained and "prepared to deliver this sad news," he concluded.

For information about service member survivor benefits, see <http://dod.mil/militarypay/survivor/index.html>.

DoD and USA Freedom Corps launch “On the Home Front”

The Department of Defense announced today that it has teamed with USA Freedom Corps to launch “On The Home Front,” a new resource for people seeking to support our troops, their families, and their communities in meaningful ways.

President George W. Bush created the USA Freedom Corps Office at the White House to foster a culture of service, citizenship and responsibility. Volunteer resources are available by calling 1 (877) USA-CORPS, or online at <http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov>.

Although there is a long tradition of writing letters and sending care packages to troops stationed away from home, the general public is urged not to send unsolicited mail, care packages or donations to service members forward deployed. Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness David S. Chu said, “There is nothing better for the morale of our troops than to know that the people back home are taking care of their loved ones and supporting the war effort.” To minimize delays and complications in sending support, DoD recommends the following:

Operation Dear Abby. Send e-mail messages to deployed troops of any service from your home state via: <http://anyservicemember.navy.mil>.



Defend America. Sign an online thank you card for troops at: <http://defendamerica.mil/nmam.html>.



Operation USA Care Package. Contribute to the purchase of a care package of items forwarded troops such as sunscreen, disposable cameras, prepaid calling cards, and toiletries via: <http://www.usocares.org/home>.

Military families may need extra help in meeting basic home and family needs during the deployment of a loved one. There are many ways individuals, organizations, and businesses can offer their time and resources to help. Following are some of the opportunities now available through the USA Freedom Corps’ new “On the Home Front” web resource.

Local chapters of the American Legion, American Red Cross, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the USA, Camp Fire USA, National 4-H Council, National Fraternal Congress of America, The Salvation Army, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) of the USA are among leading community service organizations providing ways for volunteers to help local military families. They are working with the National Guard and Reserve units, as well as with military bases, to match volunteers with families that need help in areas such as household repairs,

spring cleanings or tutoring and direct those families to businesses and organizations that may be offering free or discounted services.

Volunteers can also help families, including those who own small businesses, with specialized skills like major repairs, financial planning or legal services. Some of these organizations are also helping to take care of children, after school and on the weekends, whose families have a parent or caregiver stationed away from home. The Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Camp Fire USA, National 4-H Council, and

YMCA of the USA are playing important roles in these efforts.

Individuals can also make a difference at home by reaching out to share their time and compassion with veterans to say “thank you” for their service to our country and by volunteering with a Department of Veterans Affairs hospital or other facility.

Community volunteer service helps to replace valued volunteers who have been deployed. Local opportunities for volunteer service such as mentoring a child, teaching someone to read, working in a local police department or serving at a local food shelter can also be found through the USA Freedom Corps’ new “On The Home Front” Web site.



In this image from video a U.S. Army Paladin artillery vehicle explodes due to a misfire inside the vehicle during the Third Brigade’s firefight with Iraqi forces north of Najaf, Iraq, Thursday, March 27, 2003. Two soldiers were injured in the incident but not seriously. (AP Photo/APTN)

Army begins certification of Stryker Brigade Combat Team

The Army is initiating the evaluation process to certify its first Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) for operational employment. The SBCT is a medium weight armored vehicle force that the Army began developing in 2000 to fill the current operational gap between its heavy and light forces.

The Army's first Stryker Brigade is the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division SBCT. The brigade has transformed from a heavy mechanized infantry brigade into a rapidly deployable Stryker Brigade at Fort Lewis, Wash., over the last two years.

The certification process, known as the Operational Evaluation (OE), encompasses a series of exercises and evaluations designed to verify the readiness of the brigade itself, and the operational effectiveness and suitability of the SBCT organizational design.

The first event is a brigade field training exercise (FTX) at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., conducted 1-11 April. During the exercise, the SBCT will be augmented with a heavy element of M1 Abrams tanks and M2 Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicles, and will train against a world-class opposing force in a desert

environment under mid-to-high intensity combat conditions.

Following the FTX, the Brigade will deploy to Fort Polk, La. for a Joint Readiness Training Center exercise from 17 - 27 May. This capstone training event will evaluate SBCT's ability to conduct early entry operations and execute a range of military missions in a mid-to-low intensity combat environment, including operations in urban terrain.

Throughout the OE process, the Brigade will validate the ability of the SBCT to deploy strategically by programming rail, sea and air transportation of the Stryker vehicle and SBCT equipment. This deployment exercise includes a planned insertion of combat elements by C130 aircraft.

Upon completion of the Operational Evaluation, the Army will prepare an evaluation report, as required by the 2002 National Defense Authorization Act for procurement of SBCTs. The Secretary of Defense must then certify to Congress that the results of the evaluation indicate the design of the SBCT is operationally effective and suitable before it can be deployed on operational missions.

Testimony as Prepared for Delivery by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld continued

· We do not yet know how much damage there will be to Iraq's infrastructure—though the coalition forces are making efforts to keep that damage minimal while inflicting maximum damage to regime targets.

· We do not know how the international effort will unfold and the specifics of what each country is willing to offer.

· Moreover, France has announced it will veto any new Security Council resolution and block coalition efforts to give the UN an appropriate role in the post-Saddam reconstruction effort.

· That means we cannot know the extent to which the UN will be permitted to help the Iraqi people, what access the coalition will have to the UN's "oil-for-food" program funds, when economic sanctions might be lifted, and the answers to many other unknowns.

The point is that: with so many unknowns, we will need some flexibility. Just as the military plan General Franks developed has flexibility built into it so that our forces can deal with unexpected events on the battlefield, our budget plan must also have flexibility to deal with changing circumstances on the ground.

That is why it is important that the funding requested for the Defense Emergency Response Fund (DERF) be appropriated in that fund—with its own transfer authority—so we will have the flexibility to respond to the inevitable changes on the ground.

It is also important that Congress approve the general provisions the President has requested in the supplemental—especially the request for increased general transfer authority (GTA). The President has requested a General Transfer Authority ceiling of 2.5% of the FY 2003 DoD budget. That figure is reasonable. Increased flexibility is

needed.

The President has requested a war supplemental of \$74.7 billion. That figure is not the cost of the war; that figure is the best estimate of the money that the State Department, the CIA, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Defense need to carry us from October 1, 2002 through the end of this fiscal year.

We can't know how long the effort in Iraq is going to last—and we certainly can't tell what it is going to cost. It is not knowable.

What I do know is that, whatever it ends up costing, it will be small compared to the cost in lives and treasure of another attack like the one we experienced on September 11th—or a weapons of mass destruction attack that could be far worse.

The Milken Institute estimated that metropolitan areas throughout the U.S. sustained losses of about \$191 billion as a result of 9/11 and some 1.6 million jobs were lost as a result of the attacks. And that's not to mention the cost in lives lost and the pain and the suffering of so many who lost husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers on that terrible day.

Our mission in the global war on terror is to do everything in our power to prevent a chemical, biological or nuclear attack that would make 9/11 seem modest by comparison—an attack where we could lose not 3,000 people, but 30,000 or 300,000, or more.

Yes, \$74.7 billion dollars is a lot of money—but the cost of not investing that \$74.7 billion would be far greater.

continued on page 14

Americans rally support for troops

DETROIT, Mich. (FOX News) — Americans across the country are fed up with anti-war sentiments hogging the headlines, so they're putting out a message of their own: Support American troops and the United States of America.

When anti-war posters began showing up on lawns around Detroit, Mike Ballard decided to make some of his own in support of U.S. troops fighting in Iraq.

"We just felt that this was an opinion that wasn't expressed," Ballard said.

And Illinois businessman Mark Batinick decided to fund his own pro-troops radio campaign.

"I'm sick of the anti-Americanism," Batinick said.

Along with two other friends, Batinick forked over \$2,500 for a radio ad supporting the U.S. and coalition mission overseas. He said he's tired of hearing the anti-war cries voices by what he says is a minority of Americans.

"Unlike many people protesting American policy towards Iraq, I live in the real world," Batinick said. "I was talking to two of my buddies and we were really ticked about the support some people are giving Saddam Hussein."

Nationwide, with the war now underway, more Americans are coming forward to support their troops.

In Wisconsin, half of the town of New Auburn lined a highway overpass to cheer on deploying soldiers.

They quickly organized the rally after learning a convoy was coming through town.

And in South Dakota, one dad is putting up a flag each day, for each day his son is away on active duty.

"One flag every day until he comes home," said dad Fred Keifer.

"I'm proud of my son," Keifer said. "He's doing his duty. That's what he's in the service for. And I'm doing something for him."

Testimony as Prepared for Delivery by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld continued

Mr. Chairman, we need the funds—and we need flexibility in how they are spent, so we can adapt to unforeseen and unknowable circumstances that will unfold in the weeks and months ahead.

We will continue to brief the Congress regularly as events unfold on the ground, as these unknowns come into better focus. We appreciate the strong support you have shown for the President, and for the men and women in uniform. They are doing a remarkable job and I know that they will succeed in their mission.

I'd be happy to take your questions.

For Kevin Henson, it's the service of his brother, Scott, that motivated him to put up Scott's picture at a Sam's Club in Brandon, Fla., to join photos of all service members in that community.

It's all part of a campaign called Neighborhood Heroes, which was founded by Sam's Club employees.

As part of the project, Sam's Club displays the pictures of local troops in the front of the store to serve as a patriotic reminder. The store is also donating care packages to the featured troops.

"A couple of us came together and said, 'hey we need to do something for the troops heading overseas,' to let the people in the neighborhood realize and our members here realize that we care about them," Henson said. "And whenever they come back, we have open arms waiting for them."

That very need continued to galvanize Americans of all stripes as they step forward with pro-American messages of all kinds.

Local news stations around the country, such as WJXT in Chicago, are inviting area residents to send in names of people serving in the military or civilians working to support the war effort here at home so that the station can profile them on the air.

About 5,000 people rallied in downtown Bellevue, Wash., Saturday in the biggest pro-troops demonstration yet in western Washington. Participants lined the streets while holding American flags and pro-troops signs. It was sponsored and organized by radio station 570 KVI.

"I mean we love our country and we know what our good president is doing," participant Carol Cassidy told KOMO TV.

Bob Riggins told KOMO TV that he's supporting the sons and daughters of America, including his own.

"He called me last night and says all he sees is the protests and the demonstrations against the war," Riggins said of his son stationed in Korea. "And he doesn't see any of the support and I told him we're out here."

Last Saturday, residents of Saco, Maine, lined Main Street with yellow ribbons, hanging them on utility poles from the war monument at the top of downtown to the Amtrak station, to show support for the troops despite the anti-war sentiment there. The ribbons were paid for by Owen Davis Post 96 of the American Legion.

"It's a great idea," post Commander David Walker, who was in Vietnam, told the Portland Press. "(Soldiers) are doing a service for this country. They deserve the respect and support of the American people regardless of how you feel about (the war)."

"It's a great, patriotic thing to do," Debbie Davis, the owner of the store making the ribbons, told the Press. "I don't totally support war, but I totally support the troops."

Fox News' Jeff Goldblatt and Liza Porteus contributed to this report.

DoD provides teens on the move with online help

by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Sample, USA, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 26, 2003 — Moving to a new school. Making new friends. Those are just a few of the stressors that plague teenagers and children of military families more often than their civilian peers.

John Molino, deputy undersecretary of defense for military community and family policy, said children whose parents are in the military move at least five times in a sponsor's military career. Each year, he said, some 250,000 military children move.

However, help in dealing with the anxiety of yet another permanent change of station can be found at <http://dod.mil/mtom>. That's the address of an improved Defense Department Web site designed especially for teens and children of military families.

The Web site is "Military Teens on the Move," and DoD is asking teenagers to log on April 1, which coincidentally begins DoD's "Month of the Military Child." Another site for children ages 6 to 12 called "MTOM for Kids" can be accessed at the same address.

Molino said the new Web site is designed to help teens and children deal with stresses of their parent's military careers.

"This initiative is an effort to communicate better to our teens who are military dependents because they move so often, far more often than the average American youth and they go often to unfamiliar places," he said. "Moving can be very trying, very compelling, and we're trying to make this transition easier."

The site designers, Chuck Thomas Creative, an Illinois-based agency, surveyed teenagers. "They found out what teens said they

would need and what they would find helpful," Molino said.

"Teenagers have a lot of questions, and most think they are the only ones in the world with that question. And what they'll find at the Web site is information that responds to those questions," Molino said.

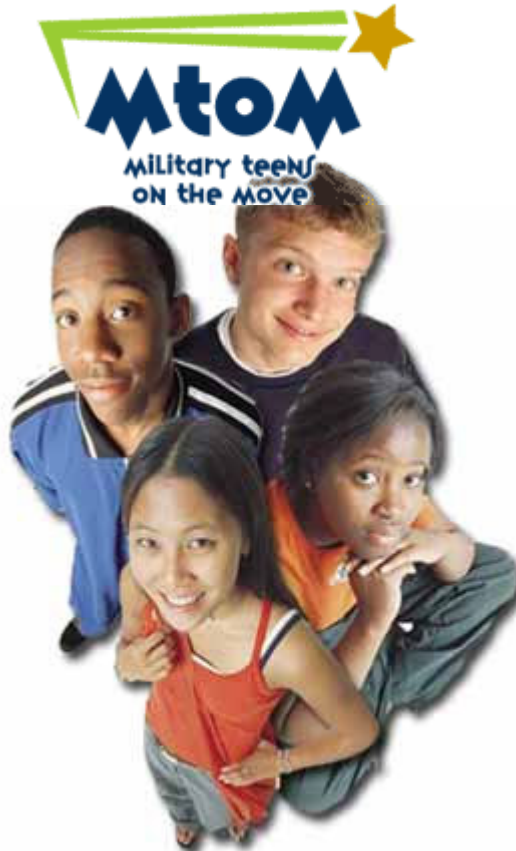
"How do I cope with this move? How do I tell my close friend I'm about to move? What can I find out about the new school or neighborhood?" he said. "This site either gives them that information directly or provides links to that information indirectly."

The site also provides a bulletin board that military teens can use to post messages to other teens who may be dealing with the same issues and to help them connect with new friends, he said.

Molino said the site would be updated regularly to ensure it stays current and safe for teens. And, he said, links to other Web sites will be monitored to ensure that "we are not sending our teens down a wrong path."

The site isn't a cure-all for young people who have trouble coping in the military, but DoD is hopeful it will help military teenagers and children understand their roles as part of the DoD family, he added.

"The president has made a commitment to improve the quality of life of not only the service member, but of the complete family," Molino said. "We think this is one step closer to completing that social compact that we have with service members and their families — to make them feel as if they belong, because they do, and let them understand how much we appreciate not only the service of the service member, but also the service of the family."



British Royal Marine Eric Walderman dons a Kevlar helmet that saved his life by withstanding four bullets in the southern Iraqi port of Umm Qasr.



Local Iraqis welcome British tanks as they arrive in Basra.



A Mark 105 Magnetic Influence Minesweeping System (SLED) is recovered by crewmembers in the welldeck of the amphibious transport dock ship USS Ponce, during mine clearing operations off the port of Umm Qasr Tuesday, March 25, 2003. The first delivery of humanitarian aid through Umm Qasr was delayed Thursday, March 26, 2003, after more mines were found in the waterways leading to the port. (AP Photo/U.S. Navy, Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Bob Houlihan)



U.S. soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 70 Armor, frisk a camel herder in the desert in Iraq south of the city of Kerbala, March 27, 2003. U.S. forces said they were braced for their biggest battle yet on the road to Baghdad — an expected clash near the Shi'ite holy city of Kerbala with elements of Iraq's Republican Guard. Reuters photo.

Navy bomb disposal experts with a specially-trained, bottle-nosed Atlantic dolphin used to help ferret out mines in the port of Umm Qsar, Iraq on Wednesday.

AP Photo



A U.S. flag flies at half-staff, rear, as a POW-MIA flag flies over a monument honoring past prisoners of war at the Fort Bliss U.S. National Cemetery Tuesday, March 25, 2003, at Fort Bliss in El Paso Texas. At least 10 members of the 507th Maintenance Company based at Fort Bliss are missing in Iraq, five of whom were seen in Iraqi video being interrogated. (AP Photo/Tony Gutierrez)

ARNEWS posts 'Iraqi Freedom' Web page

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, March 26, 2003) — The Army News Service has gone online with a new Web site for "Operation Iraqi Freedom."

For news with multiple embedded photos from the front lines of the war, go to <http://www.dtic.mil/armylink/news/stories/>.